

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4860

UNCLAS SAN JOSE 2964

ARA FOR ACKERMAN

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: APER, CS

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FSL COMMERCIAL POSITION

REF: (A) STATE 148458
(B) SAN JOSE 2601

1. IN ADDITION TO THE FSL POSITION REQUESTED FOR THE POLITICAL SECTION IN REFERENCE B, EMBASSY ALSO URGENTLY REQUESTS A NEW FSL COMMERCIAL UNIT POSITION TO BOLSTER THE TRADE PROMOTION AND ECONOMIC ANALYSIS FUNCTIONS OF THE ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL SECTION.

2. WITH THE MODERNIZATION OF COSTA RICA'S ECONOMY, U.S. ECONOMIC INVOLVEMENT IN COSTA RICA IS CHANGING BOTH QUALITATIVELY AND QUANTITATIVELY. THIS PROCESS OF CHANGE CLEARLY DEMANDS DIFFERENT AND INNOVATIVE RESPONSES ON THE PART OF THE ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL SECTION IN ORDER TO MEET NEW DEMANDS. THE

PROBLEM IS BASICALLY TWO-FOLD: (A) TO MOUNT AN EFFECTIVE TRADE PROMOTION EFFORT IN AN ATTEMPT TO REVERSE A LONG-TERM DETERIORATION IN THE U.S. SHARE OF THE COSTA RICAN MARKET, AND (B) TO MEET THE ISSUES POSED BY A LARGE, INCREASING AND CHANGING U.S. CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN COSTA RICA--AN
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INVESTMENT MADE MORE COMPLEX BY A SIZEABLE INTEREST IN

REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT AND BY THE ATTENTION FOCUSED ON THE COUNTRY AS A POSSIBLE CENTER--OR HAVEN--FOR MULTINATIONAL FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS.

3. THESE TWO FACTORS HAVE PLACED A HEAVY BURDEN UPON THE ENTIRE ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL UNIT. THE DEMAND IS FOR BETTER ANALYSIS--MARKET AND INDUSTRY ANALYSIS, AS WELL AS FOR MACRO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS-- AND FOR MORE EXPERT USE OF NORMAL

COMMERCIAL TOOLS SUCH AS THE WTDR'S AND ADS' WE ESTIMATE THAT DEMAND FOR ALL COMMERCIAL SERVICES OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS HAS INCREASED AT LEAST 45 PERCENT (WITH THE "WALK IN TRADE" OF AMERICANS INTERESTED IN INVESTMENTS PARTICULARLY HEAVY). DURING THIS SAME PERIOD, HOWEVER, THE ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL SECTION HAS LOST TWO USAID/FINANCED POSITIONS, AN AMERICAN ECONOMIST AND A LOCAL STATISTICIAN, BOTH OF WHOM WERE USEFUL IN DIAGNOSTIC ANALYSIS DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE COMMERCIAL FUNCTION.

4. WE INTEND TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OUTLINED ABOVE BY THE CAREFUL REORGANIZATION OF FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMERCIAL UNIT. THIS WILL INVOLVE RECRUITMENT OF A HIGHLY QUALIFIED PROFESSIONAL COMMERCIAL SPECIALIST TO FILL A VACANCY WHICH WE WILL HAVE IN THE COMMERCIAL UNIT EARLY IN SEPTEMBER AND AN INCREASING DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITY TO THE THREE PRESENT LOCAL POSITIONS. THE NEW POSITION REQUESTED IN THIS ELEGRAM WOULD BE EXPECTED TO TAKE OVER MUCH OF THE ROUTINE WORK OF THE UNIT IN ORDER TO FREE THE OTHER COMMERCIAL SPECIALISTS FOR SUCH SUBSTANTIVE WORK. THE MAJOR REQUIREMENTS OF THIS NEW POSITION WOULD BE:

1. CONTRIBUTE TO THE PREPARATION OF WTDRS.
2. RESEARCH COMPANY REGISTER GOCR.
3. CLIP NEWSPAPERS FOR COMPANY FILES.
4. ASSIST IN THE MAINTENANCE OF AGENCY INDEX FILES.
5. ASSIST IN MAINTENANCE OF COMMERCIAL BIOGRAPHIC FILES.
6. LIAISON WITH GOCR OFFICES AND CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE FOR COMMERCIAL INTELLIGENCE.
7. ASSIST BUSINESS VISITORS IN USE OF LIBRARY RESOURCE MATERIALS.
8. PROCUREMENT OF DOCUMENTS AND DATA AS INSTRUCTED.

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THIS WOULD BE A LOW-SALARIED JOB NOT REQUIRING A GREAT DEAL OF EXPERIENCE OR SPECIAL TRAINING, BUT WE THINK IT WOULD BE VERY ATTRACTIVE FOR A PARTICULAR TYPE OF CANDIDATE, E.G., A STUDENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION IN THE UNIVERSITY OF COSTA RICA, WITH INITIATIVE AND CREATIVE ABILITY, WHO MIGHT LATER MOVE INTO ONE OF THE SENIOR COMMERCIAL POSITIONS.
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